

National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority

727. SHRI ANNASAHIB M.K. PATIL : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority created by an administrative order does not enjoy stationary authority and is only extended appendage of the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals and the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices will continue to monitor the prices of bulk drugs;

(b) if so, furnish the details of justification for NPPA not being given the statutory status with independence in fixation of prices as envisaged under the new drug policy;

(c) the details of the functions assigned to NPPA and steps taken to ensure its early functioning;

(d) the total number of cases pending for price fixation, revision or rationalisation; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to ensure speedy disposal of the pending proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA) : (a) to (c). The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority has been created under the Drug Policy, 1986 as modified in 1994. The modifications did not stipulated that the NPPA should be a statutory authority. NPPA would be an independent body, as envisaged in the new Drug Policy. The Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices is only a recommendatory body and does not monitor the prices of drugs.

(d) and (e). Price fixation/revision of prices of indigenously produced bulk drugs and formulations is done in accordance with the provisions of DPCO, 1995 and the prices are notified in the Official Gazette from time to time, which is a continuous process.

Venue of Lakhubhai Pathak Case

728. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether on September, 30, 1996 Delhi Police Commissioner decided to make an appeal to the Supreme Court next day for the change of venue of Lakhubhai Pathak trial case;

(b) if so, whether the Home Ministry had accorded its consent to the above action of the Police Commissioner; and

(c) if not, the reasons for by passing the Home Ministry which control the Delhi Police?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (c). Information is being collected.

Streamlining of PDS

729. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV :
SHRI G.M. KUNTURKAR :
SHRI SURESH PRABHU :

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether streamlining of the Public Distribution System from October onwards has been deferred;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether views of the State Governments were taken in this matter;

(d) if so, the States who offered their comments and whose views were incorporated in the programme; and

(e) if so, the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) :

(a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Hon'ble Prime Minister in his Independence Day address to the Nation on 15th August, 96 announced that 10 kg. of foodgrains would be provided every month to the poor families at half the normal price. The scheme was to come into operation from 2nd October, 1996, Gandhi Jayanti Day. However, in view of the election in Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir the scheme was deferred.

(c) Yes, Sir. The issue of streamlining the PDS was discussed in the conference of Chief Ministers on Basic Minimum Services held during 4-5 July, 1996. Keeping in view the suggestions of the Chief Ministers, a Conference of the State Food Minister's was held on 7th August, 1996 to discuss further the question of targeting the PDS.

(d) All States/UTs had participated in the Conference of State Food Ministers held on 7th August, 1996. The Conference unanimously endorsed the proposal for targeted PDS especially the provision of subsidised foodgrains to the population below poverty line and recommended that the Central Government might bring in this targeted PDS into force as soon as possible.

(e) The matter is under consideration of the Government.

Deaths due to Starvation

730. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the starvation problem in Orissa and loss of lives as a result thereof during the recent months; and

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for such situation occurring frequently in the State;

(d) whether the Government are also aware of the fact that the people suffering from starvation are not getting full assistance provided by the Central Government meant for drought/starvation;

(e) if so, whether the Government have conducted any inquiry in this regard; and

(f) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b). Even though Government of Orissa have reported drought conditions in varying degrees in many parts of the State, due to deficient rainfall during South West Monsoon, 1996, it has not reported any instance of death due to starvation.

(c) As the State depends on rainfall for its crop production, a poor monsoon results in failure of crops and resultant drought conditions.

(d) No, Sir. Government of India is regularly monitoring and reviewing implementation of these programmes to achieve the desired level of targeting.

(e) and (f). Do not arise.

[Translation]

Uniform Procurement Policy

731. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :
JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA :

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether in the absence of Uniform Procurement Policy in the country different varieties of agroproducts have been kept under different categories in different States;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether certain State Governments have drawn attention of the Union Government towards this;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) and (b). No, Sir. Government is following a uniform procurement policy. The Minimum Support Prices fixed for major agricultural commodities are uniformly applicable through-out the country. The prescribed specifications for procurement of foodgrains at Minimum Support Prices are also uniform all over the country.

(c) to (e). A representation had been received from Punjab Government about PR - 106 variety of paddy being accepted as Fine instead of Superfine. It has been clarified that although this variety of paddy is categorised as Superfine, in some cases, it may be accepted as Fine if the admixture of lower groups of paddy was higher than the prescribed limit.

[English]

Smuggling of Arms

732. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a huge quantum of smuggled arms has been seized during the month of September, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the number of persons arrested so far; and

(c) the action being taken to stop smuggling of arms in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Wheat Production

733. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Agriculture scientists have worked out a comprehensive plan to raise wheat production in the current financial year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to bring more land under wheat production and to raise production thereof; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Main thrust points to raise wheat production during *rabi* 1996-97 are :

1. Greater emphasis on timely sowing (mid November) in all regions to enhance input use efficiency and achieve high productivity.
2. Replacement of old disease susceptible varieties with new improved ones. Attempts would be made to replace HD 2329 with PBW 343, WH 542 and UP 2338 in Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh; HUW 234, Sonalika and HUW 206 with Sonali, K 8804, Vishali, K 9006 and K 8962 in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal.